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Atari Online News, Etc.
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->From the Editor's Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"
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Presidential debate number one is in the history books. Romney, prior to the debate, was heard to say that he wasn't expecting too much in this first debate. My gut feeling, Romney was playing opossum! All that I've seen of the debate (I watched bits and pieces), Romney did a number on Obama. Obama appeared to feel out of place, nervous, and not too well prepared. We'll have to wait and see if the president can bounce back at the next debate! So, get your scorecards ready, and get prepared for Round 2!

Until next time...

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - Bethesada Unleashes Battlecry Studios!
""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""" Angry Birds Teases Star Wars Merger!

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!
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Bethesda Unleashes A New Development Team: Battlecry Studios

Today, Bethesda Softworks revealed that it has established a new studio in Austin, Texas called Battlecry Studios. Rich Vogel, who previously worked on Star Wars: The Old Republic on behalf of EA s developer BioWare, will head up the studio. Vogel worked on Ultima Online and Star Wars Galaxies previous to his tenure at BioWare, and left BioWare this past July.

While it’s completely unclear what games this new Bethesdsa-owned studio will be working on, it appears to be MMO-related, and could very well have to do with The Elder Scrolls Online. Battlecry Studios has job listings for positions such as Monetization Designer, tipping their hand. Furthermore, job listings talk about working on an "upcoming online game." Strangely, other open positions at the new company stress an "excellent knowledge of FPS’s and RPG’s."

Bethesda Softworks works with, funds and publishes both externally-developed games (with recent examples like Brink and Wet), and nurtures a small group of studios that it outright owns, most notably id Software.

Battlecry Studios will be the ninth Bethesda-owned studio (via parent company ZeniMax), joining a stable including Bethesda Game Studios (The Elder Scrolls, Fallout), Zenimax Online Studios (The Elder Scrolls Online), id Software (Doom, Quake, Rage), Arkane Studios (Dishonored), MachineGames (first project forthcoming), Tango Gameworks (first project forthcoming), Vir2L Studios (wireless projects) and Mud Duck Productions (casual games projects).

’Angry Birds’ Teases ’Star Wars’ Merger on Tumblr

The Angry Birds are headed to a galaxy far, far away, according to a teasing Tumblr posted on Friday.

The Angry Birds Tumblr posted an image above, of a hooded, round figure holding a lightsaber. It was confirmed later Friday by Fast Company that Finnish game maker Rovio Entertainment was partnering its Angry Birds transmedia brand with an even more powerful one: Star Wars.

Fast Company reports there will be a Star Wars/Angry Birds hybrid game released on Oct. 28, and the several toys released before then.

As casual games grow as a category and mobile devices grow as an interface, it s going to become more important for us in the future, Paul Southern, vice president of licensing and consumer products marketing at Lucasfilm, told the publication. Our partnership with Rovio helped us to understand a little bit more about how they achieved that success.

The cryptic Tumblr also mentions that there will be something happening at the Times Square Toys ’R Us in New York on Monday, Oct. 8, at 10 a.m. EST. Rovio has already released extensive Angry Birds merchandise, including toys, apparel and food items.

Rovio just released their newest game Bad Piggies on Sept. 27. It said the game has already been the fastest-selling of any in the Angry Birds franchise, even though no birds are featured in the game.

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A-ONE’s Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Like Something on Facebook, Go Directly to Jail

You might want to think twice the next time you Like those Facebook pictures of your cousin’s new baby or retweet something funny from your friends especially if you live in the Philippines. According to the new Cybercrime Prevention Act, you can go to jail if you participate in cybersex, identity theft, hacking, spamming, pornography, and yes, even social media in the Philippines.

The new law, signed into effect on September 12 by President Benigno Aquino III, is vague in its explanation of what online libel even means. "Who is liable? It isn’t clear. The one who made the original post? The ones who share? The ones who tweet? Even you, if you post a simple, ’hehehe,’ right? Does that mean you agree?" Filipino Senator Teofisto Guingona III said.

Of course, this law has caused quite a protest among the 35 million Filipino social media users. Hackers have sent an ironic message by defacing government websites while other lawmakers are penning petitions to stop the law. Currently, there is no sign that the government intends to start a repeal.

FTC Charges Firms With Deception on Computers

Federal regulators have charged 14 firms and 17 people with impersonating major companies to trick consumers into thinking their computers were plagued by viruses so they could charge hundreds of dollars to fix the problems.

The Federal Trade Commission said Wednesday the action was part of a new international crackdown on such tech-support scams. The agency says a federal judge in New York City has issued an order halting six alleged scams and freezing their assets.

The FTC says the telemarketing schemes mostly operate from India and target English-speaking consumers in the U.S., Britain, Canada, Australia, Ireland and New Zealand.

The agency says the telemarketers claimed they worked for companies such as Microsoft and Dell, saying they had detected a virus or malware. They offered to fix the problems remotely for $49 to $450.

The FTC alleged in lawsuits filed in New York that the companies and individuals violated a federal law prohibiting unfair and deceptive practices, and the agency’s telemarketing sales rule. They also illegally called phone numbers listed on the Do Not Call Registry, the FTC said. It said the companies used 80 different computer domain names and 130 phone numbers to avoid detection by law enforcement authorities.

The agency is seeking unspecified restitution for the affected consumers.

The firms named in the suits are Pecon Software Ltd., Pecon Infotech Ltd., Pecon Software UK Ltd., PCCare247 Inc., PCCare247 Solutions Pvt Ltd., Connexxions Infotech Inc., Connexxions IT Services Pvt Ltd., Zeal IT Solutions Pvt Ltd., Lakshmi Infosoul Services Pvt Ltd., Finmaestros LLC, New World Services Inc., MegaBites Solutions LLC, Greybytes Cybertech P. Ltd. and Shine Solutions Private Ltd.

White House Says It Thwarted Cyberattack

The White House is acknowledging an attempt to infiltrate its computer system, but says it thwarted the effort and that no classified networks were threatened.

White House spokesman Jay Carney told reporters the White House is equipped with mitigation measures that identified the attack, isolated it and prevented its spread.

He said there was no indication that any data was removed.

"There are distinctions between those networks that contain classified information and those that don’t, and the attack was against an unclassified network," Carney said.

Carney described the attack as "spear-phishing" and said such efforts against government computer systems are "not infrequent." Carney spoke in Henderson, Nev., where President Barack Obama is preparing for his first debate against rival Mitt Romney on Wednesday.

"Phishing" is a tactic that involves sending an email that falsely claims to be from a legitimate enterprise in an attempt to trick the user into turning over information.

Last year, Google Inc. blamed computer hackers in China for a phishing effort against Gmail accounts of several hundred people, including senior U.S. government officials and military personnel. Last November, senior U.S. intelligence officials for the first time publicly accused China of systematically stealing American high-tech data for its own national economic gain.

The White House would not say whether the recent attack was linked to China.

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, during a visit to China last month, raised the subject of China-based cyberattacks against American companies and the government.

News of the most recent attack came as the Obama administration is preparing an executive order with new rules to protect U.S. computer systems. After Congress failed this summer to pass a comprehensive cybersecurity bill, the White House said it would use executive branch authorities to improve the nation’s computer security, especially for networks tied to essential U.S. industries, such as electric grids, water plants, and banks.

An initial draft of the order included provisions for voluntary cybersecurity standards for companies, a special council run by the

Homeland Security Department and a review to determine if existing cybersecurity regulations are adequate.

But by issuing the executive order just weeks before the election, the White House risks complaints that President Barack Obama is anti-business from Republicans and the same pro-business groups that killed the legislation on Capitol Hill. They opposed a Senate bill that they said could lead to costly rules and regulations that would burden companies without reducing the risks.

Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, one of only a few Republicans to support the Senate bill, said Monday that an executive order is a "big mistake" because it can't grant incentives, such as liability protection, to encourage businesses to share information with government agencies about cybersecurity threats and vulnerabilities.

Executive orders are legally binding, but can be reversed by subsequent administrations, and they don't reflect a consensus as legislation passed by Congress does, Collins said at a cybersecurity event sponsored by The Wilson Center.

"I fear that it could actually lull people into a false sense of security that we've taken care of cybersecurity," she said. "And the executive order simply cannot do that."

Warning: Facebook Scam Tricks Users to Share - or Pay

A Facebook hoax is spreading widely across the network, encouraging users to share a message to avoid paying for membership.

The scam message says that Facebook has released a new membership price grid, including gold, silver and bronze levels of membership. It claims you can avoid paying by sharing the message's text with your friends before midnight. If not, says the message, you'll be forced to pay next time you sign on.

If you see one of your friends share the below message, do them and their friends a favor and let them know it's bogus.

One hint that the message is fake should be that it says your icon will turn blue if you share the message, though the icons of those who've shared it haven't changed colors.

As Sophos points out, this scam is spreading because it appears friends are doing their friends a favor by sharing.

Informed users will remember that Facebook has said several times that the social network will always be free for users. However, that became a bit less true this week, when personal promoted posts were released.

Dallas Man Linked to Anonymous Hackers Indicted

A North Texas man linked to the worldwide hacking group Anonymous is facing federal charges for YouTube videos and Twitter postings in which he

taunts the FBI and threatens to ruin one agent’s life.

Barrett Brown was taken into federal custody in Dallas last month, but authorities wouldn’t say why he was being detained until Thursday, when the U.S. attorney’s office announced a three-count indictment against him.

The 31-year-old Brown is charged with Internet threats, conspiracy to make publically available restricted personal information of a government employee and retaliation against a federal law enforcement officer.

The indictment lists several tweets in which Brown talks about having a "plan to kill every government you meet" and taunts the FBI. It also quotes from a YouTube video entitled in part, "Why I’m Going to Destroy FBI Agent Robert Smith."

Brown uses several expletives in the video and complains that authorities are harassing his mother, who he says is innocent.

"So that’s why Robert Smith’s life is over," Brown said in the video. "But when I say his life is over, I don’t say I’m going to go kill him. But I am going to ruin his life and look into his (expletive) kids."

Brown has previously been linked to the Anonymous movement of cyber-rebels and was often quoted in media reports about the shadowy movement.

The writer was the subject of a raid by the FBI in March, after the FBI and other law enforcement agencies swooped in on alleged members of the Lulz Security hacking collective. Lulz is an Anonymous offshoot that claimed responsibility for a series of eye-catching electronic attacks against Sony Corp., FBI affiliate groups and the U.S. Public Broadcasting Service.

Doug Morris, a federal public defender assigned to represent Brown, declined to comment.

An earlier attorney for Brown, Jay Leiderman, also declined comment Thursday, saying he needed a chance to review the indictment. Leiderman has said he believed some of the charges stemmed from a YouTube video in which Brown rails against law enforcement.

Pop-up Ad Queen Caught by The U.S. Government, Fined $163 Million

You’ve probably never heard the name Kristy Ross before, but we’re willing to bet you’re very familiar with her work. You may have even given her money. For the last five years (at least), Ross has been flooding the internet with pop-up ad after pop-up ad, all claiming that your computer yes, yours specifically is infected with viruses. That’s illegal, and it turns out the law has finally caught up to her: The Federal Trade Commission has just fined Ross a staggering $163 million dollars for her crimes.

The infamous fake computer scan ads encourage you to download "free" anti-virus software under the names Winfixer, DriveCleaner, FreeRepair, WinAntivirus, WinAntispyware, or System Doctor. Once you’re hooked by the fraudulent warning, the advertisements redirect you to a page trying to sell you anti-virus software for $40 to $60 a pop. According to the government, "more than a million" were victims of Ross’s scam. And given

the size of the judgement almost surely proportional to the amount of money Ross raked in from the folks she defrauded we’re willing to bet that 1 million is a low estimate.

The terms of the judgement prohibit Ross, whom we’re officially nominating as today’s "worst person in the world," from selling computer security software in the future. Though it’s admittedly questionable whether what she was selling technically qualified any in the first place. Which is sad, because you can get really good anti-virus protection for your computer for free.

The Windows Ecosystem Reboot Is Bad News If You Plan To Move Country

I was browsing The Verge forums today and came across this post, which is probably one of the most apt descriptions of what s wrong with the Windows ecosystem reboot:

> About twelve years ago when I was 10 years old I created my MSN account which would now be my Microsoft account. I have used this e-mail for everything, and when the Xbox came around I used it for Xbox Live. This being in the early 2000 s DLC and internet services were near to non-existent.
>
> At the time I was living in Amsterdam, and from the time the Xbox 360 came out I have spend hundreds of euros, and hours on my Xbox account. Having bought all that DLC and unlocked thousands of achievement points. So now I live in the UK and because of Microsofts old policies, I can not in ANY way change my location. I can not add a credit card or purchase content available in the UK.
>
> So I contacted Microsoft and all they had to say is, it s unchangeable, you need to make a new account . As if it was nothing, do they not understand that I would lose all of my DLC, Achievements, save games and everything else connected to that account?

This has always been an issue with the Xbox ecosystem, and now it s a problem with the Windows ecosystem too. It s still not fixed. There are no workarounds. Update: I m now aware of this hacky workaround, but calling it a solution is like putting a band-aid on a broken leg.

The new subscription Xbox Music, Windows Phone s games and Windows 8 s paid applications sound great until you realize what the catch is. You stand to lose everything if you move.

Microsoft doesn t understand that people travel around the world, and are hugely sentimental about things they ve paid for. Here s a list of some services that are affected by Windows Live ID billing region locks and what you will lose if you move countries:

> Xbox Live Achievements, Gamer Score, Content, Membership
> SkyDrive Storage Photos, Files
> Zune Music
> Office 360 Documents
> Windows Phone Integration
> MSDN Subscription
> Azure Services Online services, Servers, storage.
> Windows 8 Login Settings, Wallpapers and Tight integration on all

levels

It s not good enough, there s not even a way to export out any of this data. If you re planning on moving, be warned. You may lose your data.

Facebook Will Charge To ’Promote’ User Posts

Facebook has long declared that it’s "free and always will be." And it still is unless you want more friends to see what you have to say.

The social media giant is rolling out a feature in the U.S. that lets users pay to promote their posts to friends, just as advertisers do. Facebook has been testing the service in New Zealand, where it tries out a lot of new features, and has gradually introduced it in more than 20 other countries. Facebook said Wednesday that promoting a post such as announcing a garage sale, charity drive or big news like an engagement will bump it higher in your friends’ news feeds.

"Every day, news feed delivers your posts to your friends. Sometimes a particular friend might not notice your post, especially if a lot of their friends have been posting recently and your story isn’t near the top of their feed," wrote Abhishek Doshi, a software engineer at Facebook, on Facebook’s news site.

Facebook didn’t say how much it will cost to promote the posts, only that it’s considering a range of prices as part of the test. On Wednesday, though, some users could see $7 as a cost per each update that they want to promote.

Teen Behind Kidnapping Hoax Tweet Returns Home

The 16-year-old girl who vanished after sending a hoax tweet that someone was in her house has returned home safely, following a 48-hour period that sent the Internet into a roller coaster of reactions.

Police found Kara Alongi walking along the side of a New Jersey highway and took her to a nearby hospital for evaluation, a common practice in teenage runaway cases, according to the New Jersey Star-Ledger The news comes as Alongi faked her own kidnapping on Sunday night after asking her Twitter followers to call 911, saying "there is someone in my [house]."

The Internet quickly responded to her message. The hashtag #HelpFindKara trended on a global level on Twitter and nearly 34,000 people retweeted her call for help to raise awareness about the incident. Not to mention the more than 6,000 phone calls the local police department received after her tweet went viral.

But when Alongi’s family returned home that same night and the area was inspected by police, it soon became clear that there were no indications of forced entry or stolen property.

Authorities traced her scent from the back of the house to a neighbor’s yard until it disappeared, the report said.

It has since been confirmed that a cab driver dropped off a young girl who matched Alongi’s description at a nearby train station. Police spotted on a security camera that she had purchased a train ticket to New York City. Her iPhone was found on her dresser at home.

"The investigation quickly revealed a number of inconsistencies in the teen’s statement," police said in a statement. "Specifically, it was discovered that a person called a local taxi company asking for a car at Alongi’s address around the same time the Twitter message was posted."

Twitter users who showed concern just hours earlier started turning to the site to express their frustration with the event.

> #helpfindkara a hoax? disgusted.
>
> dennbbbbiighh(@denbighbeedle) October 1, 2012

> This kara girl went from the most worried about girl on twitter, to the most hated.
>
> Bryan Soth (@BryanTS18) October 1, 2012

Her mother said the move was "out of character" for the honor student. The teenager complained of a headache before her parents left the house to bring her brothers to a hockey practice and went to rest in bed. Her parents said they weren’t aware of any hardships happening at home or at school.

It’s unknown at this time if Alongi will be charged for faking her own kidnapping.

64 Raspberry Pis + Legos = Supercomputer

Computer engineers combine 64 Raspberry Pis and a Lego-built framework to create a DIY supercomputer.

ZoomEarlier this year, Raspberry Pi lured the world in with the scent of a $35, linux-powered mini-PC. Since its release, the device has been used for a number of creative purposes. But one team of engineers at the University of Southampton has decided one Raspberry Pi just isn’t enough. Instead, the group gathered up a whopping 64 mini-computers and combined them to create one gigantic, super Raspberry Pi.ZoomTaking good notice of Moore’s Law, the team realized the cost of creating a supercomputer has dropped exponentially over the years, allowing them to create one for as little as £2,500. (approx. $4,000 USD) Combining 64 Raspberry Pi devices, 64 16GB SD cards and a modular framework made of Legos, the team was able to make a system with 11 GHz of processing power and 1TB of memory.

Led by professor Simon Cox, the team has kindly created a detailed guide for anybody looking to create their own Raspberry Pi supercomputer. Head on over to the Southampton page to check it out!

Microsoft To Launch Surface at Midnight on October 26th

Microsoft has started sending out invites to a special "Surface Reception" event on October 25th. Alongside a Windows 8 introduction, the software giant will launch its highly anticipated tablet at midnight on October 26th according to a company spokesperson. Some of Microsoft's holiday pop-up stores will open for the Surface launch at midnight, with other Microsoft Stores selling the tablet on October 26th.

Microsoft has not yet confirmed pricing for its Surface tablet, with CEO Steve Ballmer hinting that "probably $300 to about $700 or $800" is the "sweet spot" for pricing.

Official Bieber Fan Site Fined $1 Million for Illegally Tracking Your Preteens

He knows when you're sleeping. He knows when you're awake. He knows when you've been bad or good. But we're not talking about Santa Claus here we're talking about barely legal pop sensation Justin Bieber, whose official fan website was part of a government crackdown of sites that illegally collect data on underage visitors.

According to an Federal Trade Commission (FTC) report, the company that owns the official Bieber fan club (You can join for just $99 a year! What a bargain!) has been collecting information pertaining to over 100,000 visitors to the site aged 12 and younger. That's a big no-no, and a direct violation of the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. The same company also maintains and illegally collected data via RihannaNow.com, SelenaGomez.com, and DemiLovatoFanClub.com.

Terms of the settlement require Artist Arena LLC to pay a $1 million fine for their transgressions. It's the second high profile internet victory for the FTC this week: Just yesterday, the agency announced that it levied a $163 million fine on a woman who blackmailed people with fake computer scans.

Hidden Powers of Your Mouse

You use your mouse for just about everything: you drag, you drop, you highlight, you scroll. But even if you click your mouse a thousand times a day, I bet I've got a few secret mouse tricks you've never heard of.

Click Tricks

You surely know that double clicking highlights a word, and you might even know that triple clicking highlights a paragraph. But have you ever wanted to select a column of text in a Word document, without getting all the text to the left and right of it? Here's how you can: Hold down the alt and left mouse button (on a Mac, option-left mouse), and drag the cursor over the section you want to select. The coolest thing about this trick is that the text you are selecting does not even need to be formatted as a column for this to work.

Scroll Tricks

Most mice have a scroll wheel. Sure, it takes you up and down on a page, but in combination with other keys, it can do much more:

Scroll sideways: In many versions of Excel, holding down the shift key while scrolling will take you sideways. That's super helpful in a big spreadsheet.

Scroll wheel as back button: In most web browsers, if you hold the shift key while using the scroll wheel, it works like the back button: You can fly through all the sites you've recently visited. (Some mice have side buttons that work like back and forward buttons in your browser, too.)

Scroll to zoom: Holding ctrl and scrolling lets you zoom in or out of the page you're viewing. Ctrl-scroll up zooms you in; ctrl-scroll down zooms you back out. On a Mac, this trick will zoom in and out your whole screen, not just the document you're in.

Windows-Specific Tricks

While most of the tricks I've listed so far work in either Windows or Mac OS, here are a few that are specific to Windows machines:

To maximize a window: drag the title bar to the top.

To minimize all windows except the active window: "Shake" the title bar. Then if you want to restore all the windows you just minimized with this shortcut, just click again on the title bar of the window in view.

To view two windows in a 50-50 split: Drag the title bar of one document to the left edge of your screen, then drag a second document to the right edge; they will snap into position in a nifty side-by-side view.

Bonus Sneaky Trick

Suppose you want to walk away from your hyper-secure work computer for a few minutes and not have to re-log in when you get back. Sure, you could change the sleep settings, but this idea is much more clever: Set your mouse on top of your analog watch or a clock. The mouse tracks the second hand's movement and it tricks your computer into thinking you're still busy working. Of course, there are valid security reasons for NOT using this trick, but I still think it's cool that it works.

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